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ABSTRACT

Organizational climate was examined at nine, four-year public colleges, using data from 2,397 respondents. All were multi-purpose colleges ranging in size from 2,000 to 11,000 students. Data were obtained from the Higher Education Management Institutes' (HEMI) data bank. The HEMI questionnaire section on organizational climate, which is appended, was used. Findings include: (1) climate had relevance at the organizational level in that it distinguished organizations from one another, but sub-units, particularly workgroups related to departments, accounted for the largest proportion of variance; (2) administrators had significantly and consistently more positive perceptions of organizational climate than did faculty; and (3) organizations with comparatively more positive climates displayed greater "adequacy of performance focus," based on institutional goal clarity, supervisory performance standards, and performance- based evaluations. In seven of the nine institutions, significant differences between the climate scores of administrators and faculty were found, and in all seven the scores of administrators were higher than those of faculty. Implications for theory and administrative practice are discussed. (SW)

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"Organizational Climate of Institutions of Higher Education: Construct Determination and Relationship to Organizational Effectiveness Criteria."

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This paper was presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association for the Study of Higher Education held at the San Diego Hilton in San Diego, California, February 14-17, 1987. This paper was reviewed by ASHE and was judged to be of high quality and of interest to others concerned with the research of higher education. It has therefore been selected to be included in the ERIC collection of ASHE conference papers.

ABSTRACT

"Organizational Climate of Institutions of Higher Education: Construct Determination and Relationship to Organizational Effectiveness Criteria."

Two major questions related to organizational climate have existed in the organizational theory literature for the last twenty years. First, at what level of analysis should the climate construct be operationalized (i.e. does climate have greater relevance at an organization-wide or sub-unit level?) Second, in what specific ways do organizations with positive climates differ from those with comparatively more negative climates.

This study examines organizational climate in nine, four year public colleges and utilizes data from 2,937 respondents. The most significant findings are: 1) climate does have relevance at the organizational level in that it distinguishes organizations from one another, but in institutions of higher education sub-units, particularly workgroups related to departments, account for the largest proportion of variance, 2) administrators have significantly and consistently more positive perceptions of organizational climate than do faculty, 3) Organizations with comparatively more positive climates display greater "adequacy of goal focus and performance standards".

These findings will be presented and their implications for theory and administrative practice will be discussed.

Statement of Research Problem and Literature

Organizational climate has been regarded as an important construct in organizational research for more than twenty years (Field and Abelson, 1982; Joyce and Slocum, 1979, 1982; Litwin and Stringer, 1968). Despite an extensive body of research, major theoretical and methodological questions related to the construct remain unresolved (Field and Abelson,1982; James and Jones,1974; Woodman and King,1978;). There is broad agreement, however, that organizational climate is a construct that identifies relatively enduring characteristics of an organization, and one which can be utilized to distinguish among organizations (Campbell, et al,1970; Forehand and Gilmer,1964; Tagiuri,1968). Consequently, organizational climate should display organization specific variance and can be expected to be relatively homogeneous within organizations and relatively heterogeneous among them (Drexler, 1977; Ansari, 1980).

Researchers have assumed that on the basis of perceptions of organizational characteristics, individuals develop a "global" or "summary" perception of their organization (Schneider, 1975; Tagiuri, 1968). The measurement of organizational climate is derived by aggregating these summaries for a sample of individuals from the focal organization (Joyce and Slocum,1982). Confusion exists among theorists as to precisely what these perceptual summaries represent; do they represent attributes of people or of organizations (Guion, 1973; Woodman and King, 1978)? If the former is the case, the question arises as to whether researchers

can continue to conceive of organizational climate as a relatively enduring characteristic of organizations. If the latter obtains, what theoretical model accounts for the process by which the perceptions of individuals can be transformed into an organizational entity? James presents these questions in the following terms:

> Of concern here is the "unit of theory" for climate and a "composition theory" for climate. The former term pertains to the appropriate level for operationalizing a construct (e.g., individual or organization), and the latter term refers to a specification of how a construct operationalized at one level of analysis (e.g., psychological climate) is related to another form of that construct at a different level of analysis (e.g., organizational climate) (1982, p. 219).

The purpose of this study is to aid in establishing the proper "unit of theory" for the climate construct by analyzing whether organizational climate primarily characterizes organizations or some smaller unit of analysis comprising organizations. Specifically, does organizational climate exhibit greater variance at the inter-organizational or intra-organizational level? Additionally, differences in the perceptions of climate on the part of various sub-groups are examined. Furthermore, the characteristics which distinguish organizations with contrasting climates are explored. No study appearing in the literature has explicitly addressed these issues for a population of institutions of higher education. In so doing, this research follows the admonishment of some theorists and applies the prodigious research on more general populations of organizations to colleges and universities (Bess, 1983); and implicitly consid-

ers the utility of this more general research for higher education.

Background and Significance

Despite its prevalence in the organization theory literature, climate remains ill-defined (Joyce and Slocum,1982). Research findings are often contradictory and no consistent agreement exists among theorists as to the construct's conceptualization, determinants or meaning (Guion, 1973; Hellriegel and Slocum, 1974; James and Jones, 1974; Tagiuri, 1968).

Nevertheless, organizational climate remains an important research topic. This is so for numerous reasons. First, there is evidence of a relationship between climate and other organizational variables.[1] These links with other constructs aid in the prediction of organizational phenomena and in the formation of a nomological net (Field and Abelson,1982). Second, the construct is responsive to the need of researchers to unite micro and macro levels of analysis (Astley and Van de Ven, 1983; Pfeffer, 1982; Poole and McPhee, 1983;). Third, climate has been considered useful for organizational development efforts (Kets deVries and Miller,1984; Offenberg and Cernius,1978; Likert 1961,1967). Fourth, organizational climate has been found to in-

1. The organizational climate construct has been found to be related to a large number of individual and organizational factors. It has been demonstrated to have a strong relationship to concepts such as job satisfaction, job performance, group communication, leadership, structure and organizational commitment as well as organizational performance (Ansari, Baumgartel and Sullivan,1982; Bowers, 1976; Joyce and Slocum,1982; LaFollette and Sims, 1975; Lawler, Hall and Oldham,1974; Likert, 1961, 1967; Muchinsky, 1977; Schneider and Snyder, 1975; Welsch and La Van, 1981).

fluence the motivation and behavior of individuals (Friedlander and Greenberg,1971; Litwin and Stringer, 1968; Roach and Baltis, 1974). Fifth, empirical findings demonstrate that climate exerts a significant effect on organizational performance (Franklin, 1973,1975; Likert, 1961,1967; Moss-Kanter, 1983). Sixth, the construct incorporates a perspective that moves analysis away from the more static, structural qualities of "organization" toward the more dynamic process of "organizing" (Weick, 1979; Pettigrew, 1979).

Most studies of organizational climate attempt to relate the construct to an additional set of conceptually distinct variables. As noted, however, the actual measurement of organizational climate through the use of aggregate perceptual data remains controversial in terms of the meaning of the resultant dimensions (Woodman and King, 1978). In this regard, Gulon (1973) was the first to frame the basic issue:

> "The idea of perceived organizational climate seems ambiguous; one cannot be sure whether it implies an attribute of the organization or of the individual" (Gulon, 1973, p. 120).

During the past sixteen years, there have been ten major reviews of the organizational climate literature: Campbell, Dunnette, Lawler and Wieck, (1970); Field and Abelson,(1982); Glick,(1985); Hellriegel and Slocum, (1974); James and Jones, 1974; Litwin and Stringer, (1968); Payne and Pugh, (1975); Schneider, (1975); Taguri, 1968; and Woodman and King, (1978).

The questions raised in these reviews can be broadly summarized by two interrelated problems: 1) identifying whether or

not perceptual and objective measures of organizational climate are measuring the same construct, and 2) determining the level of analysis at which organizational climate should be conceptualized. Controversy exists over whether climate is an attribute occurring at the individual, group or organizational level (Field and Abelson, 1982; Woodman and King , 1978). It is this latter question which is of relevance for purposes of this study.

James and Jones (1974, 1979) attempt to evade the issues that this question raises by conceptualizing two climates-- one for organizations and one for individuals. They recommend partialing out that portion of the variance that is statistically accounted for by individual differences and identifying it as "psychological climate" while the remainder of the variance should continue to be identified as "organizational climate." Such an approach, however, supplies no resolution of the basic theoretical dilemmas, especially since James and Jones (1974) agreed that the organizational climate construct should be retained. In fact their distinction can be seen to have clarified and sharpened the debate rather than resolving it.

Several studies have found significant effects at intermediate levels between the individual and the overall organization. Powell and Butterfield (1978) found that climate varies across sub-units in the same organization. Payne and Mansfield (1976) found that the variation in organizational climate scores for organizations were only slightly larger than the variances for any one hierarchical level. Their findings suggest that level in the hierarchy may account for a significant effect on organizational

climate. Schneider and Bartlett's (1970) findings imply similar conclusions with respect to level in the hierarchy. Howe (1977) found that climate responses were more a function of group membership than personal characteristics. Johnston (1976) found evidence for two climates in the organization he studied, both of which were a function of longevity of employment. And Gregory (1983), in research using the anthropological concept of "native-view paradigms," makes the case that the perceptions an individual holds of an organization result from membership in a group culture.

In examining colleges and universities, Stern (1966)found that the perceptions of organizational climate for both freshmen and administrators were so much higher than the perceptions of other groups on a campus that they seemed quite unrealistic. In fact, the differences were so great that Stern described them as the freshmen "mythology"about the campus and further explained that this mythology was shared only by the administrators. In a related study, Centra and Hartnett (1974) found that college administrators had a slight but consistently higher perception of organizational functioning than did faculty.

Climate as an organizational attribute was examined by Drexler (1977) and Ansari (1980) to determine if it has organization-specific variance. In both studies, the relative strength of organization versus sub-unit (departmental) effects was also tested. In Drexler's study a main effect of organization was found which explained 42% of the variance. Sub-unit effects were found too, but they were much weaker than the organizational ef-

fects. Ansari's results generated similar conclusions. Hartnett and Centra (1974), while not examining organizational climate per se, found significant agreement among administrators, faculty and students with respect to evaluations of institutional functioning in colleges and universities,although as noted, the perceptions of administrators were consistently more positive. The findings of these studies support the hypotheses that are derived here.

Statement of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1. Organizational climate will vary significantly among organizations.

Hypothesis 2. Variance in organizational climate due to organizational effects will be greater than that due to intra-organizational (sub-unit) effects.

Hypothesis 3. Workgroups will produce a greater effect on climate scores than will other sub-unit effects (i.e. role and length of service).

Hypothesis 4. The organizational climate scores of administrators will be significantly more positive than those of faculty.

Hypothesis 5. There will be a significant difference in the climate scores of individuals based on length of service.

Research Question : On what specific variables do the organizational climates of organizations in which there is a negative perception of climate differ from those in which there is a more positive perception of the climate.

Data Collection

Data for this study were obtained from the Higher Education Management Institutes' (HEMI) data bank. HEMI is an outgrowth of the American Council on Education and since 1978, as part of its management training and development activities, the institute has maintained a program of research and analysis on managerial functioning and effectiveness in higher education. As an integral part of this effort, the institute has surveyed over 70,000 Board members, presidents, administrators, faculty, staff and students in over 200 institutions "to determine their attitudes towards and perceptions of many aspects of management at their institutions." Van Wijk (1981, p. 1).

A sample of nine institutions was drawn from the HEMI data base. These institutions were selected based on their commonality with respect to a number of key dimensions. These are: 1) Control - all institutions in the sample are publicly supported. 2) Mission - all institutions in the sample are four year multi-purpose colleges. 3) Size - all institutions range in size from two to eleven thousand students.

The HEMI Questionnaire section on organizational climate (appendix A) was used as the response measure variable. This instrument, which was extracted from a larger questionnaire, contains 36 items related to organizational climate dimensions. The items are rated on a Likert-type scale,with higher mean scores reresnting more positive organizational climates.

The average size in terms of numbers of students at the nine institutions was 6,847. The range in size was from 2,199 students to 10,800 students.As Table 1 shows, response rates at the nine institutions were very high ranging from 39% to 99%. At only one institution was the response rate under 50%. There were a total of 2,937 respondents in the sample. The category of administrators contained 422 cases or 14% of the total sample; Department Heads represented 13% or 381 of the cases; and the Faculty category contained 2,134 cases or 73% of the sample. A total of 2,618 or 89% of the respondents indicated their length of service; this group evidenced the following frequency distribution: (1) less than 1 year = 336 (13%), (2) between 1 and 5 years = 821 (31%), (3) between 5 and 10 years = 488 (19%), 4) between 10 and 15 years = 520 (20%), 5) more than 15 years = 453 (17%).

Table1
Institutional Characteristics and Response Rates

Institutional Number	Enrollment	Number Faculty	Number Respondents	Response Rate
1)	5,538	404	280	69%
2)	7,611	700	271	39%
3)	2,199	243	239	99%
4)	10,800	708	523	72%
5)	8,909	562	521	92%
6)	6,332	417	343	82%
7)	7,539	413	340	82%
8)	10,549	423	232	55%
9)	2,247	200	198	99%

Results

Hypothesis 1. Organizational climate will vary significantly among organizations.

The data in Tables 2 and 3 shows that Hypothesis 1 was supported, $F(8, 2,928) = 8.978$, $p. < .001$. A Scheffe procedure was performed to see which groups were actually different from one another. Table 5 presents the seven organizations that were found to be significantly different from at least one other organization. The calculation of eta squared for a main effect for organizations equals 2.39.

Table 2
Analysis of Variance Testing Differences Among Mean Organizational Climate Scores

Source	D.F.	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F Ratio
Between Groups	8	87.2539	10.9067	8.978*
Within Groups	2928	3557.2028	1.2149	
Total	2936	3644.4567		

Institution	N	X	S.D.
Institution 1	280	4.93	1.282
Institution 2	271	4.96	1.051
Institution 3	239	4.79	1.217
Institution 4	513	4.89	1.120
Institution 5	521	4.90	1.006
Institution 6	343	5.17	1.044
Institution 7	340	5.31	1.172
Institution 8	232	4.68	1.094
Institution 9	198	5.06	0.905
Total	2937	4.97	1.114

* p <.001

Table 3
Organizations Reporting Significantly Different Climate Scores

Organization	Mean	Different From
Organization 1	4.93	7
Organization 2	4.97	None Sig. different
Organization 3	4.79	6, 7
Organization 4	4.89	7
Organization 5	4.90	7
Organization 6	5.17	8, 3
Organization 7	5.31	8, 3, 4, 5, 1
Organization 8	4.69	6, 7
Organization 9	5.06	None Sig. different

Hypothesis 2. Variance in organizational climate due to organizational effects will be greater than that due to intra-organizational effects.

Intra-organizational units were defined in several ways to test this hypothesis. Firstly, a typical definition of workgroup was used (e.g. formally structured, bounded units of interacting individuals). Secondly, role or position in the organization was used to form nominal groups of 1) administrators, 2) department chairs, and 3) faculty. Finally, length of service was used as a basis for defining five additional nominal groups categorized according to the following: (1) less than 1 year, (2) between 1 and 5 years, (3) between 5 and 10 years, (4) between 10 and 15 years, (5) more than 15 years.

Only organization 2 and 4 were used for this hypothesis because these were the only two institutions in which all the workgroups were large enough to provide adequate cell sizes for use in analysis of variance. The two institutions were combined

in an ANOVA. Together they had seventeen workgroups (9 in organization 2, and 8 in organization 4) ranging in size from 13 to 97 individuals. Organization 2 had 239 useable cases for the analysis and organization 4 had 378. These two institutions also had 54 administrators and 487 faculty. There were 60 people with length of service in category 1, 166 in category 2, 106 in category 3, 161 in category 4, and 124 in category 5.

Table 4 displays the results of this analysis. There were significant main effects for organization $p<.001$, role $p<.01$ and workgroup $p<.001$. But the variable length of service did not attain significance. However, workgroup accounted for a greater percent of the variance (eta squared = 8.46) than did either organization (eta squared = 1.94) or role (eta squared = 1.29). Hypothesis 2, therefore, was not confirmed. Although a main effect for organization can be observed, it does not account for as much of the variance in organizational climate as do workgroups.

Table 4

Analysis of Variance Testing Differences Among Variables of Organization, Role, Length of Service and Workgroup for Institutions 2 and 4

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F
Main Effects	79.010	23	3.435	3.339**
Organizations	13.401	1	13.401	13.026**
Roles	8.523	2	4.262	4.143*
Length	6.165	4	1.541	1.498
Workgrp	58.299	16	3.644	3.542**
Explained	79.010	23	3.435	3.339
Residual	610.041	593	1.029	
Total	689.052	616	1.119	

* p <.01
** p <.001

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Hypothesis 3: Within organizations, workgroups will produce a greater effect on climate scores than will other sub-unit effects (i.e. role and length of service).

Institution number 2 was used for the test of this hypothesis. This institution was examined separately because the point of interest was in sub-unit effects within organizations rather than across organizations. In the preceeding hypothesis, an effect for organization could also be examined. The intent here was to remove the effect for organization and assess whether any changes in sub-unit influences on climate could be observed. The results of the previous analysis foreshadowed the outcome of this hypothesis. But in the prior test, it was not possible to be certain that powerful effects for one sub-unit variable in one organization were not overriding a differential pattern of sub-unit effects in the other organization. This does not appear to have been the case.

In organization number 2, (Table 5) neither the role or length of service variables were significant. The workgroup variable, however, was significant at the $p.<.05$ level and accounted for 7.35% of the variance.

Table 5
Analysis of Variance Testing Difference in Climate Scores Between the Variables of Organization, Role, Length of Service and Workgroups for Organization 2

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F
Main Effects	26.215	14	1.873	1.783
Role	4.962	2	2.481	2.363
Length	3.666	4	0.967	0.921
Workgrp	18.916	8	2.364	2.252*
Explained	26.215	14	1.873	0.042
Residual	230.990	220	2.050	
Total	257.205	234	1.099	

* p <.05

Hypothesis 4: The organizational climate scores of administrators will be significantly more positive than those of faculty.

In this analysis,climate scores were calculated for individuals in all three roles or positions - administrators, department chairs and faculty. No hypothesis was offered for department chairs because their role was thought to be too ambiguous to offer a clear profile. The role ambiguity for department chairs stems primarily from the large overlap in responsibilities that they share with both administrators and faculty.

The test of this hypothesis was made at two levels. In the first, climate scores for all individuals in the entire data set

were categorized by role and entered into a oneway analysis of variance. There was a significant difference between the three groups F = 37.24, p.<.001 (see Table 6). Eta squared for role in this analysis was 2.47. A follow-up test using the Scheffe procedure with ranges at the .05 level indicated that the organizational climate perceptions of administrators and faculty were significantly different. Interestingly, the climate scores of department chairs also differed significantly from those of faculty but not from those of administrators.

It is especially important to note that the peceptions of organizational climate were more positive on the part of administrators than they were for faculty (or department chairs). The mean climate scores for all administrators in the sample was 5.3022 (n=422), for all department chairs it was 5.2080 (n=381) and for faculty it was only 4.8682 (n=2134).

Table 6

Analysis of Variance Testing Difference Between Climate Scores of Administrators, Department Heads and Faculty for Entire Sample

Source	D.F.	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F Ratio
Between Groups	2	90.2252	45.1126	37.240*
Within Groups	2934	3554.2315	1.2114	
Total	2936	3644.4567		

* p <.001

Role	N	X	S.D.
Administrators	422	5.30	1.127
Dept. Heads	381	5.20	1.027
Faculty	2134	4.86	1.107
Total	2937	4.97	1.114

The analysis up to this point simply highlights the differences between all the administrators and faculty members in the sample. There is a problem with ending the analysis here. This study hypothesized that climate is an organizational attribute. The logic of this position, which contends that climate is unique to each organization, dictates that intra-organizational level variables must be examined within each organization and not simply aggregated across all organizations in the sample.

It was necessary, therefore, to do an analysis of roles within each of the nine organizations in the sample. A oneway analysis of variance using role as the independent variable with the same three levels (administrators, department chairs and faculty) was done on each organization. Table 7 presents the mean score of each role within each organization. Scheffe follow-up procedures revealed that at the .05 level, significant differences existed between administrators and faculty in seven of the nine institutions. Only in institutions two and five were no differences found between these groups. Moreover, an inspection of Table 7 reveals that the mean climate score of administrators was more positive than that of faculty in eight of the nine institutions. The one institution where faculty climate scores were more positive than those of administrators was institution five and it has already been noted that this is an institution in which the differences in scores between the groups was not statistically significant. Hypothesis number four was, therefore, supported.

Table 7
Summary of Means and Standard Deviations for Administrators, Department Heads and Faculty in Each Institution

	Mean	Std. Dev.
Institution 1		
Administrators	5.74	0.887
Dept. Heads	4.71	0.942
Faculty	4.82	1.337
Institution 2		
Administrators	5.01	1.008
Dept. Heads	5.22	0.922
Faculty	4.88	1.086
Institution 3		
Administrators	5.19	1.231
Dept. Heads	4.88	1.311
Faculty	4.64	1.173
Institution 4		
Administrators	5.62	0.872
Dept. Heads	5.22	1.152
Faculty	4.78	1.106
Institution 5		
Administrators	4.89	0.909
Dept. Heads	4.85	0.936
Faculty	4.90	1.034
Institution 6		
Administrators	5.57	0.920
Dept. Heads	5.39	0.914
Faculty	5.09	1.059
Institution 7		
Administrators	5.27	1.589
Dept. Heads	5.88	0.948
Faculty	5.16	0.996
Institution 8		
Administrators	5.40	0.778
Dept. Heads	5.01	0.791
Faculty	4.48	1.125
Institution 9		
Administrators	5.72	0.692
Dept. Heads	5.19	0.914
Faculty	4.89	0.879

Hypothesis 5: There will be a significant difference in the climate scores of individuals based on length of service with an organization.

In an approach similar to that of the preceeding hypothesis, all individuals representing useable cases (for this variable) in the sample (n=2618) were placed, initially, in a oneway analysis of variance using length of service as the independent variable. There were five levels of the independent variable. They consisted of the following: (1) less than 1 year, (2) between 1 and 5 years, (3) beween 5 and 10 years, (4) between 10 and 15 years, (5) more than 15 years. In group or cohort 1, there were 336 respondents with a mean score of 5.1317; in group 2, there were 821 respondents with a mean score of 5.0678; in group three, there were 488 respondents with a mean score of 4.9111; in group 4, there were 520 respondents with a mean score of 4.9037; and in group 5, there were 423 respondents with a mean score of 4.9815.

As Table 8 indicates F is significant at the p.003 level. But, the Scheffe procedure indicated that no groups or cohorts were significantly different. Using the Least Significant Difference(LSD)as a follow-up test,however, it was found that significant differences exist between group I and groups 3 and 4. Significant differences also were found between group 2 and groups 3 and 4.

As in the preceeding hypothesis, however, the logically significant analysis must occur within each organization. Again, the basis for this approach is that climate is organization specific and that the organization sets the context in which the

significance of the variable length of service must be considered. Consequently, length of service was analyzed by a oneway analysis of variance within each organization. Follow-up Scheffe procedures on each analysis indicated that in eight of the nine organizations, length of service was not significant. Within these eight organizations, none of the groups, based on length of service, were significantly different. Only in institution seven was a significant F ratio found and a follow-up procedure indicated a significant difference only between group 1 (those with less than 1 year of service) and group 4 (those with beween 10 and 15 years of service). Since no pattern of significant differences was found within organizations between groups based on length of service, hypothesis five was not confirmed.

Table 8
Analysis of Variance Testing Difference Between the Climate Scores Based on Length of Service

Source	D.F.	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F Ratio
Between Groups	4	18.4350	4.6088	4.017*
Within Groups	2613	2997.6662	1.1472	
Total	2617	3016.1012		

* p <.01

Group	N	X	S.D.
Group 1	336	5.13	0.995
Group 2	821	5.06	1.078
Group 3	488	4.91	1.088
Group 4	520	4.90	1.051
Group 5	453	4.98	1.115
Total	2618	4.99	1.073

Research Question : On what specific variables do the organizational climates of organizations in which there is a comparatively negative perception of climate differ from those in which there is a comparatively positive perception of the organizations' climate.

This question was approached by taking the organization with the highest climate score (institution number 8) and examining it in relationship to the organization with the lowest climate score (organization number seven). Discriminant analysis was used as the analytical technique to statistically distinguish between the cases in each of these institutions.

The discriminant analysis used in approaching this question employed a step-wise procedure which enables the identification of the variables which successively account for the greatest predictive capacity. The procedure continues until all the original variables which contribute to discrimination have been identified. Wilks lambda was used to judge the importance of the discriminating power of the variables. The significance of lambda is calculated by converting it into an F statistic.

Initially, all thirty-six variables were entered into a step-wise discriminant analysis using the Wilks lambda method. Twenty variables were selected before the F-ratio became too small. The standardized canonical coefficients, which help identify the relative contribution of each variable in determining scores on the function, were quite low for all but

with goal clarity, performance standards and performance evaluation respectively, all make a reasonably significant contribution to the function. As with factor analysis, it is appropriate to name a function for the two or three variables that account for the largest amount of variance, consequently this function can be termed "adequacy of performance focus."

Table 8

"Adequacy of Goal Focus" Discriminant Function

Item #4	Variable	Mean for High Org.	Mean for Low Org.	Standardized Canonical Coefficients
184	How clear and specific are the institutions goals and objectives?	4.8529	3.2198	.8372
170	To what extent does the person to whom you report make performance standards important by reviewing results with you?	5.0500	3.7468	.4414
186	To what extent does your department evaluate its performance in relation to goals?	4.8411	3.7198	.3329
127	To what extent does the person to whom you report find time to listen to you?	5.7738	5.0363	.2711
119	How much favoritism is there in the decision making processes at this institution?	4.5617	3.2025	.2803
175	How satisfied are you with overall employer/ employee relations at this institution?	4.7647	4.3481	.2468
111	To what extent does the person to whom you report involve you in decisions related to your work?	5.7068	5.0648	.2407
188	How well do you understand the way decisions are made at this institution?	4.5088	3.4525	.2338
129	How adequate is the information flow between academic and administrative units in this institution?	4.0284	3.4784	.2133
182	How often do you receive feedback on your performance?	4.5970	3.7500	.1848

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four variables (relative contribution can be inferred from the magnitude of the standardized coefficient). The eigenvalue for the function was .3711, the cannonical correlation was .5202 and the final Wilks lambda was .7293. Additionally, this function correctly classified 72% of the cases into the high scoring climate organization and 74% of the cases into the low scoring organization.

Nevertheless, it represented a highly problematic discriminant function which contained over half the variables originally analyzed and not only produced an unwieldly but a basically meaningless function in terms of its internal coherence. Consequently, a sub-analysis was performed using the same technique that was employed with all thirty-six variables. The sub-analysis was applied to the ten variables that contributed most to the first derived function. These are items: 2, 21, 24, 44, 50, 51, 52, 83, 85, and 104.

The sub-analysis produced a much more useful discriminant function which had both theoretical and practical relevance. As compared to the first function, this superior function was achieved at relatively little cost in terms of statistical adequacy. The function produced by the sub-analysis had an eigenvalue of .3037, a canonical correlation of .4826 and a final Wilks lambda of .7670. Furthermore, it correctly classified 71% of the cases into the high scoring organization and 72% of the cases into the low scoring organization.

Table 9 presents the ten items comprising the function. Item 54 (.6372), Item 70 (.4414), and Item 86 (.3229) which deal

Summary and Discussion

This study found tentative evidence that organizational climate is an organizational property and as such it can distinguish organizations from one another. The results revealed that organizational climate scores do vary among institutions. Although, not every organization could be distinguished from every other organization in the sample on the basis of its climate score, seven of the nine institutions varied from at least one other institution. However, the effects for organization were very small; they did not account for more than three percent of the variance in organizational climate.

In contrast to what was hypothesized, sub-unit effects related to workgroups were more significant than organizational effects. Therefore, at least in institutions of higher education, climate appears to be a construct that may operate to a greater degree at the intra-organizational level than at the organizational level. Analyses on sub-units across two organizations revealed that there are main effects for organization, role and workgroup. However, organization and role combined accounted for less than four percent of the variance, whereas workgroup accounted for almost eight and a half percent of the variance. Simply put, workgroup was more important in explaining organizational climate than were the other factors considered.

When the effects for workgroups within an organization were explored, they were found to be significant and to account for a

larger proportion of variance than any other intra-organizational characteristic. This again suggests the importance of workgroups as a central variable in the organizational climates of institutions of higher education.

This may be a particularly important finding in that it highlights a comparatively unique characteristic of organizations of higher education. In other studies done on a more general population of organizations (for example, see Drexler, 1977), workgroups were found to have much weaker effects than organizations in determining climate. It may be, however, that in higher education the largest contingent of employees in the organization, namely faculty, relate to the institution so extensively through their workgroup (i.e. department) that an organization wide climate simply cannot emerge.

Additionally, as a group, administrators perceptions of climate were found to be significantly more positive than those of the faculty in the sample. Moreover,within each of the nine institutions in the sample, significant differences between the climate scores of administrators and faculty were found in seven institutions and in all seven the scores of administrators were higher than those of faculty. Apparently, role does exert a stable, systematic influence on organizational climate.

The data supply no explanation as to why administrators perceptions of climate are more positive than those of faculty. This phenomenon may occur, however, because administrators, as organizational leaders, feel a greater responsibility for the character of the organization than do others and, therefore, hold

and perhaps even promulgate positive perceptions of climate as a subtle form of self-justification. Such self-justification need not imply deceit. To the extent that administrators believe that climate reflects their influence, their positive perceptions of the climate may assert their conviction that they have acted wisely and responsibly. It could, also, be argued that administrators are isolated from routine problems and frustrations in the organization and that their judgements about the climate are inflated because they do not incorporate this information. The available research, however, suggests that just the opposite may be the case. Mintzberg (1973) found that managers have many and varied channels of information about their organization's functioning and that rather than being isolated they may actually have the broadest knowledge of the organization.

Length of service was hypothesized to influence perceptions of climate. However,this was not confirmed. Apparently, at least in institutions of higher education, individuals who simply happen to enter the organization at the same time do not continue their associations in such a way as to form a stable group with common perspectives. Indeed, it may be that given the pronounced influence of departments and workgroups in institutions of higher education that all initial socialization occurs within the department and academic division where a new faculty member is employed. Apparently, a cohort of faculty hired at the same time does not coalesce and form a basis for interaction with one

another that influences their perceptions of the organizations' climate in any identifiable way.

The research question explored the differences between an organization in which there was a comparatively positive perception of climate in contrast to one in which there was a more negative perception of climate. The results of the analysis showed evidence for a discriminant function, termed "adequacy of performace focus," based on institutional goal clarity, supervisory performance standards and performance based evaluations.

It is particularly surprising to note that on one of the important satisfaction variables the institution with the higher overall climate actually had a lower mean score. The question on which this occurred was item 27 which asks how much the "person to whom you report listens to you." On this item, the high climate organization had a mean score of 5.77 and the low scoring institution had a mean score of 5.93. These findings contradict the orientations and supporting research of the "human relations" school of organizational development (Barnard; 1938, Bennis 1966; Likert, 1967). Members of this school believe that organizational effectiveness is greatest in organizations where the climate is characterized by responsiveness and openness, especially, on the part of upper level management.

These results, indeed, the very premise of a discriminant analysis of the type performed, move the discussion into the realm of organizational effectiveness. A discriminant function derived from two institutions with contrasting organizational climates offers implications for organizational effectiveness in

as much as a positive climate can be regarded as a measure of effectiveness and a weak climate suggests the inverse.

These findings, however, are quite consistent with the work of current theorists who claim that effective organizations have a high degree of goal focus and organizational behavior that is congruent with that goal focus (Cameron, 1985; Deal and Kennedy, 1981; Moss-Kanter, 1983; Peters and Waterman, 1983). Evidently, people in organizations may not need a lot of supportive behavior from managers if they believe that they and others in the organization are devoting themselves to reasonably clear goals to which they and the organization are committed. Such an interpretation is in accord with a view of effective organizations as ones in which interpersonal differences are defocused while the pursuit of meaningful, common efforts are emphasized (Deal and Kennedy, 1981; Moss-Kanter, (1983).

It is appropriate to note here that higher education institutions are frquently described as "organized anarchies" (Cohen and March, 1974). These are organizations with a high degree of goal ambiguity. Goal conflict and lack of clarity about primary purposes has been a consistent theme in the literature on higher education (Cameron, 1981; Cohen and March, 1974). However, the identification of a discriminant function related to "adequacy of performance focus" points to the possibility that effective colleges and universities may be able to achieve goal focus despite the problems of ambiguity and conflict.

Implications for Theory

1) Organizational climate exhibits construct validity in terms of its capacity to distinguish among organizations. The strength of the construct, while not overwhelming, is sufficient to suggest that, despite its controversy in the organizational theory literature, the construct should continue to play a role in theory development.

2) Although the climate construct has utility in distinguishing among organizations, it appears that in institutions of higher education its greatest effects may be manifested within and not between organizations.

3) The central hypotheses in this study rested in part on theory developed from research on broad, heterogeneous populations of organizations. Since some of the findings in this study contradicted that research, the applicability of the research to institutions of higher education should be questioned. Research on very disparate types of organizations may have marginal utility for institutions of higher education and in some instances may mislead theorists. The uniqueness of educational organizations, and perhaps of any distinct typological set of organizations, should be kept in clear focus by researchers in designing their studies.

4) For years theorists have been attempting to determine an unambiguous set of organizational effectiveness dimensions. Their efforts frequently have focused on goal attainment as the central dimension in the construct of effectiveness. Despite the

fact that it is intuitively satisfying, goal attainment presents numerous problems for theorists. Among them are: 1) The realization that goals can shift in process so that even when a goal is achieved, it may not have been a goal when the endeavor was initiated (Steers, 1975). 2) Sometimes goals are met through factors so clearly serendipitous that goal attainment can hardly be thought of as an adequate reflection of an organizations' effectiveness. 3) In other cases, goals are apparently constructed after the fact to justify acts that preceded conscious choice and rational decision making. Karl Weick (1968, 1979) calls this process "post hoc dissonance reduction." March and Olsen (1976) contended that goals rather than motivating action are antecedent to it ,hence, they define goals as "post factum constructs." These problems serve to highlight that goal attainment is not only difficult to measure, it is conceptually elusive as well.

The results of the discriminant analysis in this research suggest that perhaps "adequacy of performance focus" is a more useful method of assessing effectiveness than vain efforts to determine whether or not organizational goals have been met. One advantage of the analysis of "performance focus" is that it may be more accessible to observation than is the measurement of whether an organization has achieved its goals.

Recommendations for Practice

1) The study suggests that the appropriate unit of analysis for climate in institutions of higher education is only

infrequently (if ever)the entire organization. Therefore, interventions that attempt to alter climate, may well be more productive if they are focused on smaller groups or units within the organization. Administrators should be careful to delimit and focus their change efforts on the sub-units that are most relevant to the issue at hand.

2) Administrators should attempt to create a clear focus on organizational goals and purposes. The organizational climate is likely to be most positive when leaders succeed in making people highly aware of organizational goals and evaluate members on the basis of their contribution to those goals.

3) Educational administrators ought to be alert to the possibility that their views of climate and those of faculty may be disjointed; administrators' views are likely to reflect a more positive perception of the climate than are those of the faculty. Thus, in order to maintain a realistic awareness of the climate perceptions of various groups within their institution, administrators should undertake detailed assessments of climate on a periodic basis.

Recommendations for Future Research

1) Since so many studies including the present one have found climates to operate at organization-wide and sub-unit levels, researchers ought to abandon their search for the one true climate level and get on with the work of studying climate at whatever levels they find it. But, they should be sure to stipulate the level of analysis they're using and to explain why.

3) More studies ought to be undertaken to ascertain if administrators' perceptions of climate are more positive than those of faculty under a wide variety of conditions (e.g. resource scarcity, etc.) and in a variety of types of institutions. Additionally, there should be efforts made to determine why administrators judgements of climate are more positive than those of faculty.

4) Researchers should devise studies that can analyze relationships between "adequacy of goal focus" as it emerged in this research and other more traditional effectiveness criteria. If it can be demonstrated that "adequacy of goal focus" displays a high, positive relationship to other effectiveness factors, its potential to supplement the goal attainment model will have been demonstrated.

In conclusion, it should be pointed out that there are several advantages to this study. For practitioners, it offers insights into optimal strategies for improving climate and thereby influencing organizational productivity. For theorists, the study demonstrates the utility of conceptualizing climates as operating at various levels (organization-wide, workgroup and role), and suggests the use of "goal focus" as a complimentary, if not, an alternative method to the "goal attainment" model of organizational effectiveness. Moreover, this research applies the rich literature on organizational theory to institutions of higher education and suggests strategies for applying that body of theory in future studies.

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APPENDIX A

Organizational Climate Items Selected From HEMI Questionnaire

Variable #	Item #								
			Very little			Some		Quite a bit	A very great deal
1)	I 2	How much confidence and trust do you have in the top administration tion of this institution (campus)?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
			Very little		Some			Considerable	Very great
2)	I 5	To what extent does the top administration of this institution (campus) strive for the achievement of educational excellence?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
3)	I 6	To what extent does the person to whom you report maintain high standards of performance?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
4)	I 8	To what extent does the top administration of this institution (campus) display concern for the effective and efficient use of financial resources?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

5) I 11 To what extent does the person to whom you report involve you in making decisions related to your work?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

Highly inadequate — Somewhat inadequate — Somewhat adequate — Highly adequate

6) I 16 How adequate is the information that flows upward in this institution?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

Very little — Some — Considerable — Very great

7) I 18 To what extent are communications candid and open between you and other department/division heads?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

Very little — Some — Quite a bit — A very great deal

8) I 19 How much favoritism is there in the decision making process at this institution?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

			Very little		Some		Considerable		Very great	
9)	I 20	To what extent does the person to whom you report give recognition for good performance?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
			Not free		Somewhat free		Quite free		Very free	
10)	I 21	How free do other department/division heads feel to talk to you about problems related to their work?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
			Highly inadequate		Somewhat inadequate		Somewhat adequate		Highly adequate	
11)	I 22	How adequate is the information that flows downward in this institution?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
			Very little		Some		Considerable		Very great	
12)	I 24	To what extent does the person to whom you report provide you with adequate information to carry out your responsibilities?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

13)	I 27	To what extent does the person to whom you report find time to listen to you?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
			Very Little		Some		Quite a bit		A very great deal	
14)	I 28	How much to you look forward to your working day?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
			Highly inadequate		Somewhat inadequate		Somewhat adequate		Highly adequate	
15)	I 29	How adequate is the information that flows <u>between</u> academic units and administrative units in this institution?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
			Very little		Some		Considerable		Very great	
16)	I 31	To what extent does the person to whom you report communicate openly and frankly with you?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
17)	I 44	To what extent does the person to whom you report encourage you and other department/ division heads to work as a team?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

			Rarely		Sometimes		Often		Very often	
How often do you see the behavior of the following as friendly and supportive:										
18)	I 50	the chief administrative officer of this institution (campus)?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
19)	I 51	the person to whom you report?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
20)	I 52	other department/ division heads?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
			Not clear		Somewhat clear		Quite clear		Very clear	
21)	I 54	How clear and specific are the institution's goals and objectives?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
			Not well		Somewhat well		Quite well		Very well	
22)	I 55	How well do you understand the way decisions are made at this institution?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
			Not clear		Somewhat clear		Quite clear		Very clear	
23)	I 57	How clear and specific are the goals and objectives of your unit (department, division, school, etc.)?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

			Very little		Some		Considerable		Very great	
24)	I 58	To what extent are decisions made at this institution on the basis of explicit, objective criteria?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
25)	I 68	To what extent are budget decisions made fairly at this institution?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
26)	I 70	To what extent does the person to whom you report make performance standards important by reviewing results with you?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
			Not satisfied		Somewhat satisfied		Quite satisfied		Very satisfied	
27)	I 73	How satisfied are you with the extent of your involvement in the preparation of the budget for your department/division?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
28)	I 75	How satisfied are you with overall employer-employee relations at this institution?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

29)	I 76	How satisfied are you with the extent of your <u>involvement</u> in the planning process in your department/division/ school?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
			Not effective		Somewhat effective		Quite effective		Very effective	
30)	I 77	How effective is this institution in resolving grievances?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
			Rarely		Sometimes		Often		Very often	
31)	I 82	How often do you receive feedback on your performance?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
			Very little		Some		Considerable		Very great	
32)	I 83	To what extent does this institution evaluate its performance in relation to its goals and objectives?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
			Not satisfied		Somewhat satisfied		Quite satisfied		Very satisfied	
33)	I 85	How satisfied are you with the way you receive feedback on your performance?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

			Very little		Some		Considerable		Very great	
34)	I 86	To what extent does your department/division evaluate its own performance in relation to goals and objectives?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
35)	I104	To what extent are innovative instructional techniques used?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

			Not satisfied		Somewhat satisfied		Quite satisfied		Very satisfied	
How satisfied are you with:										
36)	I136	your relationship with those you work with?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8